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# Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 /047 W
----------152147Z 096652 /66
R 152020Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3919
INFO AMEMBASSY ASCUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 2419

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, EC
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. I CALLED ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER TODAY, PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION WITH HIM BEFORE HE DEPARTS FOR SANTIAGO THIS WEEKEND AND IN VIEW OF HIS SCHEDULED TRIPS LATER TO URUGUAY AND BRAZIL. I BEGAN THE CONVERSATION BY GIVING THE MINISTER MY IMPRESSIONS AFTER MY WEEK OF CONSULTATIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT LAST MONTH. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD FOUND A GENERAL SYMPATHY FOR ECUADOR AMONG THE USG OFFICIALS WITH WHOM I TALKED. I ATTRIBUTED THIS TO THREE FACTORS:

(1) THE EFFORTS THE GOE HAS MADE TO RESOLVE ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL BILATERAL PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY THE KNOTTY GULF CASE. I NOTED THAT THE GULF BUY-OUT AGREEMENT NOW APPEARS TO BE ALMOST READY FOR

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SIGNATURE.

(2) THE SINCERE EFFORTS THE CURRENT MILITARY GOVERNMENT IS MAKING TO RETURN POWER TO CIVILIANS THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.

(3) ECUADOR'S GOOD RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. IN THIS

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CONNECTION I SAID THAT HE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED BY
PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT IN HIS SPEECH TO THE OAS, WHICH
I HAD JUST RECEIVED, TO THE EFFECT THAT WE WOULD
BE TRYING TO IMPLEMENT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY IN
A POSITIVE WAY, DRAWING CLOSER TO COUNTRIES THAT
PRACTICED RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

2. I TOLD HIM THAT WHILE THERE WAS A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE
TOWARD ECUADOR IN WASHINGTON I SHOULD NOTE THAT IN REGARD
TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUE OF ARMS TRANSFERS THE GOE MUST UNDER-
STAND THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS PLEDGED TO FORMU-
LATING A NEW POLICY DIRECTED AT REDUCING THE FLOW OF
ARMAMENTS, PARTICULARLY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. I SAID
THAT IN MY CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON I HAD EMPHASIZED
THAT WITHIN THIS NEW POLICY THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD
EXAMINE THE SITUATION IN EACH REGION AND IN INDIVIDUAL
COUNTRIES, BECAUSE WHAT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE IN, SAY, THE
MIDDLE EAST OR THE PERSIAN GULF MIGHT BE INAPPROPRIATE
IN CERTAIN PARTS OF LATIN AMERICA. I WAS
OPTIMISTIC THAT THE USG WOULD BE ABLE TO COOPERATE WITH
ECUADOR ON ITS SECURITY REQUIREMENTS TO A REASONABLE
EXTEND, EVEN THOUGH WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO BE FORTHCOMING
ON EVERY SINGLE REQUEST.

3. I THEN MOVED TO THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
SPECIFICALLY HIS COMMENTS IN BUENOS AIRES, WHICH THE
PRESS HAD INTERPRETED AS BEING CRITICAL OF U.S. POLICY
IN THIS FIELD. I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE NATURAL FOR
NEWSPAPERMEN IN THE THREE COUNTRIES HE WOULD BE VISITING
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IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO PRESS HIM ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS
ISSUE, AS THEY HAD IN ARGENTINA. I WAS FEARFUL THAT IF
HE RESPONDED IN EACH INSTANCE AS HE HAD IN BUENOS AIRES
HE MIGHT APPEAR TO BE CRITICIZING THE U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS
POLICY. THE CUMULATIVE IMPRESSION MIGHT BE THAT ECUADOR
WAS SIDING WITH THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES IN A CONFRONTA-
TION WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE MINISTER REPLIED THAT
HE CERTAINLY DID NOT INTEND TO CREATE THAT IMPRESSION.
HE THEN GAVE ME THE COMPLETE TEXT OF HIS REMARKS TO
LA OPINION AND POINTED OUT SEVERAL INSTANCES WHERE HE
HAD EMPHASIZED ECUADOR'S SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HAD
PRAISED PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS BEING
INSPIRED BY HIGH ETHICAL VALUES. (I AM TRANSMITTING THE
COMPLETE TEXT OF HIS LA OPINION INTERVIEW SEPARATELY.)
AFTER READING THE TEXT I OBSERVED THAT, WHILE IT DID
APPEAR TO BE MORE BALANCED THAN THE EXCERPTS QUOTED
IN THE PRESS, HE COULD BE SURE THAT THE NEWSPAPERS WOULD
EXTRACT ANYTHING THAT DID APPEAR TO BE CRITICAL BECAUSE
THIS WOULD MAKE HEADLINES. HE SAID HE WOULD KEEP THAT

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IN MIND AND ASKED MY ADVICE ON HOW HE COULD BEST DEAL WITH THE
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE DURING HIS UPCOMING VISITS.

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3920
INFO AMEMBASSY ASCUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 QUITO 2419

4. I TOLD HIM THAT I THOUGHT HE COULD PLAY A USEFUL
ROLE ON THIS ISSUE IN VIEW OF ECUADOR'S GOOD RECORD ON
HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS POSITION AS A NEIGHBOR OF THE SOUTHERN
CONE COUNTRIES. I SAID HE MIGHT WISH TO GIVE HIS VIEW
TO THE LEADERS OF THESE COUNTRIES THAT THE UNITED STATES
WAS NOT SEEKING CONFRONTATION FOR CONFRONTATION'S SAKE NOR
WISHED A BREAKDOWN IN ITS OVERALL RELATIONS WITH THESE
COUNTRIES. AT THE SAME TIME IS SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD
THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN
RIGHTS POLICY WAS NOT A TRANSITORY PHENOMENON BUT RATHER
A RESPONSE TO A VERY DEEPLY AND WIDELY HELD FEELING AMONG
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT OUR FOREIGN POLICY MUST REFLECT
OUR MOST CHERISHED VALUES, INCLUDING THE DIGNITY OF THE
INDIVIDUAL. I SAID THAT THE RECENT DECLARATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRA-
ATION HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT OUR HOPE WAS THAT WE COULD PURSUE
THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN A POSITIVE MANNER.
IT WOULD BE HIGHLY IMPORTANT IN THIS RESPECT IF WE COULD
HAVE THE COOPERATION AND ADVICE OF OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH
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SHARED OUR GOALS, LIKE ECUADOR. I REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT'S PRAISE IN HIS SPEECH TO THE OAS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND HIS STATEMENT THAT WE WISH TO STRENGTHEN MULTILATERAL ACTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. THE FOREIGN MINISTER THANKED ME AND SAID THAT HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO PUT OUR POLICY IN PERSPECTIVE DURING HIS FORTHCOMING TRAVELS. HE SAID THAT HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THAT HE WAS NOT VISITING THESE COUNTRIES OUT OF ANY DESIRE TO HAVE ECUADOR JOIN AN ANTI-U.S. BLOC. HIS FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE, HE SAID, HAD TO DO WITH ECUADOR'S TERRITORIAL CLAIM AGAINST PERU AND THE RIO PROTOCOL. THE COUNTRIES HE IS VISITING EXCEPT URUGUAY ARE ALL GUARANTORS OF THAT PROTOCOL. HE SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH ECUADOR HAD UNILATERALLY DENOUNCED THE PROTOCOL, THE GUARANTORS HAD REAFFIRMED ITS VALIDITY AS RECENTLY AS 1960. THEREFORE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW THE PROTOCOL CONTINUED IN FORCE. THIS REAFFIRMATION OF THE VALIDITY OF THE PROTOCOL HAD CAUSED ECUADOR'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED TO COOL IN THE INTERVENING YEARS. HE FELT IT WAS IN ECUADOR'S BEST INTERESTS TO REESTABLISH HIGH LEVEL CONTACTS WITH THE GUARANTOR POWERS.

6. IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID, HE WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES IN MID-MAY UPON HIS RETURN FROM HIS VISIT TO SPAIN. HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL FOR HIS COUNTRY IF HE COULD SPEAK TO THE LEADERSHIP IN WASHINGTON REGARDING THE BROAD RANGE OF U.S.-ECUADOREAN RELATIONS AND INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HE FELT THAT STOPPING IN WASHINGTON ON HIS WAY BACK FROM HIS VISIT TO MADRID WOULD AVOID SOME OF THE PROBLEMS REAGRDING PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN AROUSED BY THE MISSION TO WASHINGTON THAT THE GOE HAD PROPOSED LAST MONTH AND THEN HAD SCRUBBED IN FAVOR OF A VISIT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS. I SAID THAT I WOULD MAKE HIS DESIRES KNOWN TO WASHINGTON.

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7. IN CLOSING, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT HE WISHED I WOULD ALSO PASS ON HIS PROFOUND ADMIRATION FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND HIS POLICIES, PARTICULARLY IN HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH HE SAID STRIKE A RESPONSIVE CHORD IN ALL LATIN AMERICANS. HE REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT'S STRONG RELIGIOUS BELIEFS WHICH HE SAID THAT HE ALSO SHARED. HE WANTED WASHINGTON TO UNDERSTAND THAT HIS REMARKS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION HAD BEEN PUT FORTH ONLY IN A SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AND THAT HE DESIRED TO FIND WAYS OF FURTHERING

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THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAUSE WHICH WOULD AVOID NEEDLESS DAMAGE
TO INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS.
BLOOMFIELD

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# Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:**
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009
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**Subject:** CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS
**TAGS:** PINT, SHUM, EC
**To:** STATE
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